

# **Reflections at the End of Life**



# Reflections at the End of Life

by  
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1

WHAT is the end of man but to look through the  
eye of his reason at the wonder of things?

2

MEN risk their minds in thinking, but to risk them  
is to live. Thus many a lively philosopher has believed  
in absurdities which a man of sense could never have  
been brought to believe.

3

A PHILOSOPHER, once asked whether he could  
enunciate a single true proposition, replied with one  
of them that he could not.

## 4

MEN believe instinctively in Nature's reality and in man's power of acting upon it. But were most of them asked to demonstrate the existence of either they would be as much at a loss as to demonstrate the existence of God.

A philosophic creature born in ignorance of these experiences might very well conceive the one to be indemonstrable and the other absurd. He might say, 'Your belief in "Nature" is the superstitious fancy of a child or a savage', and 'Your supposed movements no better than the hallucinations of the insane or the ignorant.' If it were said in answer to him, 'But see the evidence! these rivers and mountains—and the cities we have built and the monuments erected to you philosophers!', he would, on the authority of his 'reason', reiterate that that alone can be or can happen that can be 'understood'.

So philosophers are apt to treat of the 'miracles' of the séance-room. They can 'understand' these miracles

as little as they can understand their bodies or their bodily movements. But because embodied selves are familiar they think them intelligible, and because disembodied are not they think them 'occult'.

## 5

POLITICAL principles succeed or fail for the same reasons that biological mutations do so. For, political organisms being still animal organisms, political changes are as much efforts at survival as biological mutations.

Hence there is no 'only' form of human government. Autocracies tend to appear when a State is in danger, democracies when a State is secure. The autocrat however would have autocracy for all time; the democrat, no less, the 'rights of man' for all time. The one strives vainly to make men always docile to the rule of the State; the other suspicious always of the rule of the State. (Stalin, Mill.)

The successful autocrat is the greatest of the enemies of autocracy; the successful democrat the greatest of the friends of democracy. Success will imperil the power of a Stalin as surely as it will sustain the power

of a Lincoln. That he may continue the dictator of his State, the autocrat may thus be impelled to confound the peace of the society he was raised to restore.

## 6

AN AGE may be measured by the men it holds to be great. In an age of hunger Marx and Lenin will be preferred to Plato and Aristotle.

## 7

WHEN SOWN in irrational minds reason engenders not truth but fanaticism.

Fanaticism has had a more direct effect upon the course of history than reason; for mankind is able in general to see at one time only one side of a question.

8

RELIGION gives men wings, and science gives them wings. In unfolding the last they have commonly folded the first, and lost the worth of both in winning one.

9

IN an age of faith men are inclined to believe in God for any reason; in an age of science to disbelieve in Him for any.

10

PRINTING PRESSES have preserved for men the riches of the ages. Yet a library may be of little more use to a scholar than to a Polynesian Islander. Learned philosophers—learned sages: without originality their learning only makes them err with confidence.

11

**EXAMINERS** are unlike chemists—they cannot isolate the varying elements of human character that tend in their varying pupils to this result or to that: as health, ambition, the love of truth, desire of reputation, courage.

12

**TO MAKE** flats out of mountains is the way of some teachers; to make mountains out of flats the way of others. These leave the heights of knowledge unapproachable. The others teach so very simply that no one can follow them.

13

A JUDGE'S WIG is sometimes more impressive than a judge's head, and an examiner out of his robes more refutable than an examiner in them.

14

IMITATION fails to imitate, only creation can cope with creation.

15

DOGMATISM and credulity --neither serves to correct the other's excesses.

16

HE 'envies' other men who sees in them the reputation he desires for himself. Hence men cannot envy those they conceive could never excel them. An aspiring general might envy Napoleon, but not so soon an insignificant Field Marshal. As little do men envy those they believe they could never excel. An ambitious undersecretary may envy his Secretary, but not so soon the blessed men for whom flags are made to fly.

Men rather 'admire' than 'envy' those that surpass the range of their envy, but admiration grows to envy with the growth of their fortunes.

17

A GOOD MAN can no more be proud of his virtue than a bumblebee of its instinct. Only those whose attainments are uncertain concern themselves with their lordly possession of them.

As he is rather a child than a man who is consistently conscious of being a Man, so he is rather a pupil than a master of virtue who is consistently conscious of his possession of virtue.

18

MEN may learn to doubt their greatness, but none can escape his pride by thinking happily of his humility.

19

GREAT MEN will be uneasy in their greatness. Greater men will not remember themselves.

20

THOUGHTS dead in men at one time may give them life at another. Men scarcely know yet what they are.

21

LOVE burns through the frailties of men; and makes a blaze of blamie though men's worst of faults give it fuel. If respect be the root, love is the flower of the virtues.

22

ONLY creatures capable of wisdom can be guilty of folly.

23

MEN are things of wonder to the wisest of the sages; yet but rarely so for the reasons men think.

24

'LEADERS of men; followers of women': men may, it seems, be both; or either; or neither!

25

FALSEHOOD can be used as truly as truth falsely. Better to cure a man with a fib than kill one with a fact. (Dr. F.)

26

CYNICS like men better bad. The general perfection of men would destroy their cynical pleasures.

27.

MEN are foolish rather than sinful. For sinners condemn themselves sooner than simpletons.

28

MEN commonly think to more purpose in solitude than when in a conference they declaim round a table.

29

HUMAN MINDS are simple and they wish the World to be as simple as themselves. They are consequently fond of 'Occam's razor'—'entia non sunt multiplicanda'; but they ignore the razor's handle—'praeter necessitatem'—which alone can make the blade useful. Men of this type are more apt to slit the throat of truth than shave its chin.

30

LITTLE ATTENTION is given today to an argument that has not a 'scientific' appearance. People of old believed in the Prophet's conception of God as a pre-eminent Ruler: today many believe in the scientist's further conception of God as a pre-eminent 'mathematician'.

31

WERE Truth to live in Hell the philosopher would ask his way to it . . .

32

IF all things be of God, man understands what sin is as little as he understands what God is. The complete realisation of God belongs, for most men, to another life.

If God be well, all is well . . . But mankind is apt to make God an invalid.

33

MEN are quite as likely to credit the same errors as the same truths.

34

HASTY 'experts' miss the truth with an armful, common men, with a handful, of reasons.

35

PRESENT-DAY philosophers seem more inclined to pick things to pieces than to piece things together.

36

ONLY as a man truly knows himself can he truly know the world.

37

TO COMPLAIN of the world is as useless as to pay it a compliment.

38

DEVOID of moral force moral grace is softness; devoid of moral grace moral force is hardness.

39

MEN'S willingness to serve is not proportionate to their success in serving, and it is in their loss that they must often find their gain. To be conquered is sometimes to conquer.

40

WILL with a capital W is an abstraction: there are as many wills as there are men.

Art with a capital A is an abstraction: there are as many arts as there are artists.

41

MEN never learn except from their needs. Whatever satisfies these, though it be as grotesque as a centaur, will be honoured by them.

In politics, religion, or art men only proclaim a new gospel when they feel a new need. (Fascism. The Group Movement. Surrealism.)

42

AS THE MIND of man matures Art gains, Law loses, its import. A perfect poem speaks more nearly to man's reason than a perfect law, and the publication of a Master's poems is of more moment to the life of a State than the publication of a Minister's speeches.

43

POETS today oppose 'magic' to 'logic'. They do not know that magic is logic and logic, magic.

By poetry is revealed an order of the Mind as logical as the order of Nature; each of these orders is the expression of a perfect coherence.

Poets are spiritual engineers, and the greatest of poets are they whose words perform the most 'work'.

44

THINKING eschews irrelevant as much as it chooses relevant thoughts. To sweep from his path all that misleads his thinking is the first power of a poet. As the hypnotist focuses the minds of other men, so the poet focuses his own mind.

The more learning men acquire the less likely they are to think clearly, and the greater must be the power of their thought to use it to purpose. Homer probably pierced the mists of his ideas more easily than Dante and Shakespeare, and the thought of a Job is clearer than that of a Joyce.

45

THOUGH clear of eye in relation to men, men be dull of eye in relation to God, the dimmest conception of the nature of God is brighter than the brightest conception of the nature of men. Men are like torches; but God a twilight coming in the sky.

46

MEN pass the Ocean by to sail their vessels into shallow streams.

47

HERE WE LIVE imprisoned as if in a sea-shell: we hear the Ocean around us, but we cannot escape into it.

48

OF THE CELL of this world Death is the gaoler: he himself calls to men to peep through its door.

49

WE KNOW in this world more of what we have lost than of what we shall win.

50

HE who fears life and fears death fears his resources to be the measure of God's . . .

Let God answer life and answer death. He has more answers than fear questions.

51

FEAR ignorance—bear death.

52

DEATH—a breaking forth from the walls of this world?

53

WHO would grow wings that encountered no obstacles? Had the world been flat no bird might have flown.

54

IT IS EASIER to believe errors with others than truth by oneself. If most men thought that two and two made five, there would hardly be a man to think they made four.

55

IT SEEMS to be but one-eyed Seers today who—in physics, biology, psychology—are spying out 'truth' . . . He who would possess a view of Truth must have eyes throughout his body—even in the soles of his feet.

56

UNLEARNED MEN may sometimes teach men better than more learned ones. Hear a man who gives a 'second' class to learning and a 'first' to Truth.

57

LEARNING of itself is seldom the creator of insight. Divorced from insight it is thus of little profit; it merely gives an elderly appearance to childishness. There are critics who contend that Brahms had no melody, Mozart no depth. To have a genuine insight into a Brahms or a Mozart is to feel, to think, to live as they did. He who can do this need know little of their 'opus' numbers. He who can not do this will not be served by a complete knowledge of them.

58

MEN'S ignorance throws pearls away to make chaplets of pebbles.

59

TO SEE the gold of men and separate it from their glitter!

60

WHAT to the Sage is a man? Is he not 'himself'? What the whole race of men? His very 'Self'? Who that is so much can be shaken by the gusts of Fortune?

Become the Ocean--and be saved from drowning.

Man is only himself when he is more than himself. See 'yourself' as all things, all things as 'yourself'.

61

WHO can wish to be loved with a love that loves only himself? Must he not desire to be loved with a love that loves all things?

62

PERFECT LOVE is stern: her one embrace unclasps all small embraces.

63

HE LOVES a woman truly who loves her for herself. Yet even so he loves her better when he finds her loving all things with himself . . .

I loved her as she loved violets.

64

THE RADIANCE of the dead—like the radiance of the other side of the moon.

If I grieve for her death what have I to lament but my grief?

65

WHOEVER believes in the life of the dead adds their life to his own; whoever disbelieves it dies their death.

66

GRIEF is like dung; if a man have a bud in his heart, it will open it.

67

THE LOVER of a grain of dust—only he knows the nature of Reason.

68

THE SPIRITS of men—of a Sage and a *crétin*—are as different one from another as the bodies of animals—of a man and an amoeba. In defining 'man' only through his body, man has therefore failed to give its due importance to his *mind*.

69

EVOLUTION has brought to light in Man a being inexplicable by evolution. Every power in him that has not for its end the good of the body is a 'super-natural'—a *mind*-originated—power.

The 'Thought' of man is the parent of evolution; evolution an intriguing offspring of that thought. To refute the 'thought' must therefore be the refutation of its 'offspring'.

70

PHILOSOPHY calls for thoughts beyond the reach of the animal. As no animal mind can think God into the world, so no rational mind can think God out of it.

The God familiar to the wise is not the God familiar to the simple. But as the Himalayas are perceived by cragsmen and by plainsmen, so God is perceived by wise and by simple men.

It is the religions of men that continue to preserve today the truth that Nature is not the womb of man's super-natural reason.

71

**COMMON SENSE** is not the only measure of the World. If problems could be solved by common sense the Englishman would be the most subtle of metaphysicians.

72

HE owns only a little who owns only his own. Though a man cannot put the sun in his pocket it is as much his as a sovereign.

73

**WHAT DISASTER** can submerge the Whole of things?

74

ONLY HE who loves the Whole can grasp the Whole, and only he who grasps the Whole can love the Whole.

75

MAN would be a more civilised being were he to suspect himself to be a more primitive one.

76

THE IRRATIONAL EGOIST despises his fellows because he depends on his fellows. His self-esteem would make light of the shoulders that carry him.

77

A SLOVEN as much as a fop may be an egoist desirous of distinguishing himself.

78

THERE ARE MATRONS would find fault with the arrangements of Paradise. The place would not be at all to their mind if they could not.

79

IT IS a defect of men to expect too much of a man. What horticulturist would expect to shake apples from immature trees? Yet men, although they recognise men's immaturity, expect to shake ripe fruits from them. Expecting dainties too from promising cabbages they grow indignant when the leaves come.

Expect from men the fruits they can produce, and, you will not be so ready to bite them!

80

IT IS ONLY to the maturest Need of the mind that Reality will truly discover itself.

81

WHAT FULFILS men's need has value; what the need of their maturity, truth as well as value. To grown-up need truth shows a grown-up World, but worlds are immature so long as needs are immature.

82

TO distinguish Truth from Value, Value from Truth is to distinguish gold from gold, and gold from gold.

Could Truth exist without Value, Value without Truth, Truth could not be loved, nor Value thought.

He who, assigning Value to religion, denies Truth to religion, and assigning Truth to science, denies Value to science, offends both in defending both.

83

TRUTH when uniting a manifold is 'beauty': when uniting men, 'goodness'. The principle of the first is harmony, of the second, love. But both are principles of Truth. Truth is a genus of which Beauty and Goodness are species.

84

THE ANIMAL MIND makes the universe distinct from its body an other than its 'self'; the rational mind makes the universe distinct from itself akin to its self.

The animal preys upon things and is preyed upon by them; reason rather fosters things and is fostered by them.

85

MEN possess two kinds of intelligence—a practical and a rational: these are rarely at peace with each other.

86

TO men's animal nature Space is as fearful as Death: for, each alike surpassing the animal's practical ends, neither can become at any time familiar to it. He that would launch into the ocean of Being must dare to lose sight of all that he calls familiar. To be at home with the universe he must cease to be at home with himself.

87

THE STARS bring man's practical intellect to dust: his scientific reason brings the stars in turn to dust.

88.

THE PHILOSOPHY of the modern mathematical physicist wants the force to deliver his thought from the restrictive fetters of material atoms and molecules.

89

MATHEMATICS is in this respect inferior to philosophy: that while philosophy may reveal, in the necessary Being of God, an absolute end for man's reason, mathematics leads her to no final goal.

Errors may be more instructive than truths, and the wise man may prefer to err with Spinoza than to be true with a measuring-rod.

The great philosopher and the great mathematician:—to be the first a man must clear his thought of every prejudice; the other may proceed without dismissing them.

The ideas of the mathematician cannot offend the prejudice of men; the ideas of philosophy may run counter to their most instinctive convictions. For this reason there exists but little philosophy in the world; and what exists is for the most part rejected. Men are therefore apt to treat philosophy—not with a view to attaining the treasures of truth—but rather as an abstract problem of pure logic.

Without understanding the end of philosophy they can ask of it only, 'Is it consistent—or is it not—with itself?' And they soon find to be 'inconsistent' in a philosophy that which does not accord with their own instinctive convictions.

The philosopher who looks for nothing better than a logical coherence in the world looks rather for a symptom than for the essence of truth. To find no incoherence in things is to discover their value as little as to find no guilt in a man is to discover his virtue.

In looking for a mere coherence in things philosophers mistake the shadow for the substance of Being.

90

PHYSICAL SCIENCE is not of a nature to secure the spiritual values of men: it is the understanding of the human Spirit alone that can do this. An age which has abandoned spiritual thought for physical science leaves spiritual values without a guardian. In an epoch of science the spirit of man—incompetent to defend the values through whose aid alone men can live—is left to no more than its animal likings or to a cynicism that smiles at all 'values'.

91

IF SCIENCE looks by itself at the world it can see no further than the feet of the Universe wandering aimlessly.

92

SCIENCE is like fire—a welcome thing in its place, a destructive one out of it.

93

NEITHER logic nor science can be true guides of philosophy: not science, for it depends upon what philosophy must establish; nor logic, for logic is but a system of abstractions distilled from philosophy.

94

OUR LIFE here is no more than the page of a book. Birth turns one and death another of its pages.

Death is not a stranger thing in life than waking out of sleep.

95

DEATH deepens love; therefore love, though aching, accepts death.

96

'SIN' is a disease affecting the mind only of those who—half animal, half human—lie between the animal and the human. If most men 'sin' it is that they are no more animals and not yet men. True animals can sin as little as true men; for the true animal wills always for his body's sake; the true man always for his soul's: he who sins must have a will for both.

97

MEN are commonly grateful, not for what they receive, but for what they do not expect to receive. The gifts of the bountiful are hence more quickly forgotten by men than those of the sparing; for of sparing men nothing is expected, and of bountiful men all.

The more Ingratitude receives the more it expects to receive, and the less grateful it is for what it receives.

Ingratitude is a kind of flattery when the object of it is a bountiful giver.

## 98

MEN'S criticisms, like their praises, depend on the expectations they have of each other. If wives look for their husbands to set out the tea-things, husbands will be censured if they set out only the teacups. Upon a different scale of expectation this imperfect activity might be the subject of smiles and encomiums.

When expectations differ in a family its peace becomes precarious; for the same acts being praiseworthy to some, and blame-worthy to others, of its members, there exist in a family grounds for dispute without number.

In determining the measure of a household's 'duty' decided characters bring peace to it; in rousing forces also contrary to expectation they equally bring discord on it.

99

THE 'MARTHAS' of this world would have all arms, all legs their own.

100

HOUSEWIVES—who treat persons like pots and pots like persons.

101

MANY women sing their sweetest to the vociferations of a despotic conductor.

102

WE should think well of the man that blames us; for he attributes to us a power which more indulgent men may not concede to us. Even the criminal might prefer the 'guilty' of a judge to the 'imbecile' of a doctor.

103

THE LESS DEVELOPED any nature is the less aware it is of any fault in it, and thus the less able it is to comprehend the censures of other men.

104

'SELF-SACRIFICE' is a virtue, not of the virtuous, but of the not-yet-virtuous.

105

WHEN men criticise God, it is their caricature of God that they criticise. . . .

To call a rose a weed is still to leave a rose.

106

**WHAT MAN** can be perfect who believes God imperfect?

107

**GOD** awaits in peace the perfection of men, and he that waits with Him partakes of His own peace.

Men would make the progress of the world an allegro, God an adagio . . . The bars of God are ages.

108

**MEN** believe themselves the source of their works; they do not understand that their works are of God—to do or not to do them.

109

THE greatest of men have accomplished the least of what they intended.

110

TO COURT SUCCESS is to court failure; for let a man succeed and he will rarely attempt to be more than he is. He often succeeds best who succeeds least.

111

HE RISES who overcomes a difficulty; he soars who overcomes a failure.

112

A MAN had better give away the treasure of his 'dignity'; for it is only his own name for his pride.

It is the highest who stoop the lowest, and only the lowliness of a man can reveal the real height of a man.

113

WHAT better reason than pride can a man have for humility?

114

HE is not humble who has 'no opinion' of himself, but he rather who has no thought of himself. He that thinks himself a continent and he that thinks himself a speck think equally of 'themselves'. Men should do their fine deeds as instinctively as nightingales sing.

115

THE GREAT ARTIST does not doubt his power when the multitude censures him: as little will a true man doubt his truth when simpletons smile at him.

## 116

'ABSOLUTE' MUSIC utters the emotions of men as these are aroused in them by the World they have made for themselves—a World which sounds within them bliss or longing or despair. It does not speak of the emotions which particular events and objects—as streams, or sunsets, or the face of a woman—excite in their mind: these it leaves to the composers of a 'programme' music.

The eloquence of the painter springs from a source unlike that of the maker of music. It speaks to the emotions of man through the particular objects of vision; through streams, or sunsets, or the faces of women. Through finite symbols it reveals the feelings—of joy or longing or despair—which the visible world has excited within him. In attempting, like 'absolute' music, to surpass the particular, this art ends still in the particular—as in the 'abstract' designs of a Picasso.

117

TO UNDERSTAND man's error listen to the *Kyrie* of Bach; to man's means of overcoming error, to his *Sanctus*.

118

MOZART was too clear an ocean not to seem to some a shallow pool.

119

TO APPRECIATE the poetry of Shakespeare it is necessary to understand the nature of men; to appreciate the poetry of Lawrence, to understand the nature of Lawrence.

## 120

THE UTOPIAS which men construct are formed too often on no other principle than that of redressing the evils of the societies in which their authors were born. To correct these evils, they conceive, suffices of itself to create a perfect community. They forget that this State of their dreams—could it come in fact into existence—would reveal new discords, new disharmonies, no more tolerable, or even more intolerable, than the evils it was designed to correct.

'To destroy the evils is not the same thing as to create the good of a State. (cf. Marx.)

The genius of the Englishman lies in his instinctive hostility to the extreme political remedies of abstract Utopias.

## 121

WHEN men exchanged the moral order of the Middle Ages for the economic order of the Modern, they lost the first without gaining the second.

Economic laws like moral laws are fruits of the natures of men. If men be evil, these laws cannot be good; if man be good, they ~~cannot~~ be evil.

No contemporary State of men can hope to distribute the goods of this world as common sense would distribute them.

### 122

PRACTICAL life engages men in little of supreme importance; though we think its work essential, it lacks the sight to look beyond itself. He works most wisely therefore in the world, who distinguishing the more important from the less, gives to each of them its proper due.

### 123

TRUE philosophers: sceptical philosophers—birds of the air and birds in a cage?

124

PHILOSOPHERS have talked more sense than any other kind of men; and, it may be, also more nonsense?

125

MEN who speak evident nonsense are termed 'simpletons'; non-evident nonsense 'Intellectuals' . . . Heads are shaken at the one, and mouths opened at the other.

126

THE VALUE of the questions men debate can not exceed the value of the men that debate them. As the worth of man increases so does the worth of his questions.

127

UNIVERSITIES may raise important problems. 'Is that gentleman "cracked" or a "wit"?' was a puzzling question once discreetly discussed at a Vice-Chancellor's dinner-party.

128

PHILOSOPHICAL genius reveals its nature as much in the questions it ignores as in the questions it propounds. To propound a metaphysical question is not the same thing as to give proof of metaphysical competence.

129

THE GREAT principles of things may lie within the power of men to understand. But men, considering man-made systems of philosophy, are prone

rather to correct the imperfections of these than to philosophise about the nature of things. It results that their philosophies give rise only to further imperfections which have themselves to be corrected in turn. Thus Aristotle's philosophy is in some degree a correction of Plato's: Spinoza corrects Descartes, and Leibniz, Spinoza: Kant corrects Descartes and Hume; and Hegel, Kant. Philosophy (so far as it has followed this course) has thus become—not a steady light upon things—but rather a light upon man's thought about things; not a light on the World as it is, but a light upon a World reflected in the eyes of men.

130

THIS WORLD ! this ante-room in which we are waiting for something.

131

ALL MEN'S worlds are worlds of thought: change their thoughts a hair's breadth and their worlds change with them.

Only where belief confirms reason, and reason belief, are men's worlds stable.

132

HE enjoys true sanity in whom belief and reason always go together. This condition of mind is one rarely to be met with except among mathematicians.

133

MEN'S beliefs are apt to conflict with the reasons they plead in support of them, and sages might often be surprised by the false uses men make of their wisdom.

134

HOW MANY of the teachers of men have been endowed with psychical power! as Jesus, the Buddha, Sankara, Socrates, Muhammad, Bahá'u'lláh . . .

135

CREDULITY commonly rests upon man's absence of knowledge, his incredulity upon its incomplete presence. The man of science is as subject to the latter as is the unreflective man to the former. (Psychical Phenomena.)

136

MEN frown at truth as easily as at absurdity; and believe in the absurd as easily as in the true.

Let the absurd be familiar—and it will pass for the true; the true unfamiliar—and it will pass for the absurd.

Credulous inquiry undermines truth; critical, solidifies it.

137

DISBELIEF founded upon knowledge is as little incredulity as belief founded upon knowledge is credulity.

138

FAITH can disagree with reason as little as reason with faith. Only false faith can be inconsistent with reason, and only false reason inconsistent with faith.

139

WHY IS IT that I think now 'Death is destruction' and now 'Death is Life'? Because now I see little, and now more.

The Universe is for ever closing and opening as men's eyes close and open.

Truth opens idle eyes and lets men in to other worlds.

140

SPEAK the World soft and it will speak soft to you. Things give themselves to him alone who gives himself to things.

141

I KNOW MORE than I can say and yet remain more ignorant than I can guess.

Yet little knowledge may become, it seems, to men who hope, the happy pointer to a greater?

142

WHAT THE 'LAW' was to the orthodox Pharisee, that the 'Method of Science' is to man today. An unaccepted truth in time becomes for men an accepted Tradition.

## 143

OF ALL the enemies of true thinking metaphor may be one of the greatest. In likening one thing to another its effect may be to confound what its aim is to expound. Who can elucidate spiritual by natural—natural by spiritual—truth? Can a planet 'will' like a man?—a thought 'move' like an atom?

A woman may 'attract' a man. But physical things, unaware as they are of themselves and each other, are in need of the awareness of a knowing 'mind' to be the things that they are and to do the things that they do.

A theory of 'attraction' can thus hardly be a theory of a kind to expound the true relation of atom to atom, of body to body. To maintain the laws of the physicist, nothing more, however, would seem to be needed than to find that in different environments physical bodies move, in a predictable manner, in different ways?

144

TRUTH stretches like a narrow causeway through the wilderness of men's imagination, and they are few that feel their way along it.

145

TO THINK the world and think about the world: --the cleft between Parmenides and Empedocles, between Descartes and Locke, between Hegel and Whitehead. The one finds his objects through thought, the other thought through his objects.

The essence of philosophy is to think, of science to think about, the world.

146

THOUGHT gives itself the Objects about which it thinks, and the Universe Thought's knowledge seizes marks the measure of its power. The greater minds are, the greater their Universe.

147

TO the animal mind a mountain is a fortuitous obstacle; to the scientist's, a volume of physical laws; to the seer's a showing of God. The animal 'knows' the mountain not at all; the scientist knows it in part; the seer, as in reality it is.

148

THE BEST apostle of a cause is often the man who can smile at it . . .

149

TO DECK a butcher's shop with flowers!—more than another a butcher perhaps may have an appetite for something better than cutlets?

150

GROWING fleetness helped inferior creatures to survive in the world, but it is apt today to be the end of men. Provide my mother with a penny-farthing rather than a motor-car.

151

THE PRACTICAL WORLD is too many-sided a world for men to be generally other than dogmatists. They must take some side or taking none become incapable of action.

152

STATESMEN use their peoples, as an artist his 'matter', to express their ideals.

Hence he is but an indifferent statesman whose ideal cannot govern his 'matter', and he is a bad one

whose 'matter' governs his ideal. The perfect statesman, like the perfect artist, equally adapts his ideal to his matter and his matter to his ideal. (Augustus. Lincoln.)

153

**THEORY and Practice:** each guides the other to men's ends—or, alone, is lost in clouds or quick-sands.

154

**NEW EVILS** engender new needs, and it is only a new need that can break an old habit.

Great men therefore work upon smaller only when new needs have made men pliant.

The disasters of men are hence the opportunities of great men. (St. Paul.)

155

TO INTERPRET men's histories is to interpret men's needs.

156

UTILITARIANS confound the peace of the body with the peace of the mind. Their service to men is also a disservice to men in encouraging in them a way of life which may presently discourage them.

157

OUT OF GOOD comes evil things, and out of evil good things. Notwithstanding, the good remains good, the evil, evil. Human love can be no evil, though the spoiling of men may come at times of its carelessness; and drunkenness no good, though inspiration may flow at times from its enjoyment.

158

HE who copies a folly misses even the merit of originality.

159

TUNE your mind to things, not things to your mind. Only when man's egoism tunes his strings are things inevitably out of tune with him.

160

WHAT IS IT but man's egoism that is at war with the universe—that makes him when his hour comes say still to himself—'All happiness is a chimaera, and suffering alone is real'?

Men should not understand the universe in the light of their personal lives, but their personal lives in the light of the universe.

161

WHAT ARE private misfortunes or fortunes but fugitive eddies in the repose of an infinite Ocean?

162

ENJOY the endless space of Nature—and finding there emancipation from the limits of the self rest infinitely in its rest.

163

THE Infinity of Nature—boundless: the Infinity of God—Completeness.

Each—a Stillness.

164

WHAT is still to be has more in it of truth than what has been already.

Men Here are creatures of a single world; men Beyond, of many worlds. (Plato. Sankara.)

165

TO CLIMB in this world seems already to be climbing out of it.

166

OUR nearest friends we love as beings temporal and not as timeless; it is for this reason that we lose them.

167

THE THOUGHT of death ought not to interrupt but to prolong the thought of life.

168

DEATH does not ride the man that sits loosely to life.

169

A TRUTH which stands alone is as meaningless as the piece of a jigsaw puzzle. Such a truth will lead men into error as certainly as a falsehood.

Like the divers pieces of a puzzle the divers truths of the World are the parts of an indivisible Whole.

170

AS PHILOSOPHERS we ought not to be 'specialists': we ought not to build a storey without building a house.

Thinkers that thus build in part can build no more than architects' 'Follies'.

No philosophy can be complete which takes no account of the labours of every kind of expert—of mystics, scientists, philosophers, prophets, artists, occultists.

Learn from experience that those you least agree with have a jewel hidden from you that might add another to your own.

171

WORDS have meaning in so far only as the hearer is competent to re-create in his mind the thought they convey. All men can understand the word 'Food'.

but who is there able to understand, like a Christ, the word 'Love'? . . . Phrases, chapters, books at one time meaningless may thus in course of time become magical—as the magical may become meaningless. Until men reach the level of truth, their preferences must remain as unstable as their criticisms insecure.

## 172

PAINTERS use objects only as instruments: things possess for them the force of words; they do not paint the tree, but the tree's meaning; not objects, but the significance of objects. To the common eye things are like the sounds of words spelt out in a dictionary; to the painter's, those same sounds as they hasten from the throat of a prophet or from the lips of a lover.

## 173

WORDS are like clothes—the finest of them need renewing: 'Love', 'Duty', 'Good'—like the great in tatters, these words seem at present to be in need of refreshment!

174

**YOUTHFUL GENIUS** is inclined to censure; mature, to forgive. The tolerance of maturity is the fruit, not of indifference, but of insight.

175

**CHRIST** chid men for a moment and forgave them for ever.

176

**HE** is his worst foe who fails to know his true friend.

177

**TO PREFER** white persons to black is to confound the mind with the body of man.

178

MEN have tastes in men as they have tastes in food: as if men were pâtes.

179

TO BE strikingly attired, it would seem, is the aim of 'the lady of fashion'. Striking ugliness and striking beauty are thus alike admired by her. The strikingly ugly is however always the easier to come by, and therefore eccentricities of dress are often more in vogue among the ladies than its beauties. It is somewhat the same today with the Arts of the world. For, like the ladies, artists love the striking; and since the striking beauty of the artists of yesterday is not altogether easy to come by, eccentricities of beauty seem today no less in fashion than the 'combinations of various colours' in which alone the famous Archdeacon perceived his congregation of ladies to be unusually attired.

180

THE PURPOSE of science is to discover the true nature of physical objects, of ethics the true nature of spiritual objects. Only as these discoveries are made can the inquirer determine what should be his own relation to these objects.

Philosophers notwithstanding tend to investigate the ethical character of man apart from any inquiry into the nature, for his reason, of 'man'. To talk of 'virtue', 'the good', and the like apart from any metaphysical investigation into the nature of 'man' is, however, to build without a foundation.

Were men, for example, for my reason to be nothing more than instruments of my enjoyment, on what but my unreason could I found my sense of duty towards men? To prove my sense of duty I must first prove another nature in men. My sense of duty thus depends, not upon itself, but on the nature, for my reason, of 'man'—as my sense of awe at the stars depends on the proved majesty of these objects.

Know the nature of the stars and your sense of awe will be solidly founded; and of men, and your sense of duty will be so.

## 181

IN PHYSICS the scientist looks for consistency; for the end of such science is to discover a rational order in Nature: in ethics he must look for inconsistency; for the end of ethics is to discover, as well as the reason of man, man's attainment of reason; and this is always through conflict—through inconsistency.

That 'man' must be what *he is not*' is thus no paradox in ethics. A paradox of the kind could indeed be no more true of a 'rational' man than it could be true of a phenomenon of Nature. But of an irrational man the paradox is not merely admissible, it must needs also be admitted; for 'to be what *he can not be*' is the essence of the irrational man.

182

WERE MEN like atoms, the statistical results of the economist might be as convincing as the statistical results of the physicist. But men are unlike atoms. Change their ways from worse to better and the results that flow from them are also no less changed. Could atoms be thus 'schooled' in their ways what would become of men's physics?

183

THE PRINCIPLES of Nature and the principles of Spirit, although interconnected, are as different as non-conscious existence is from self-conscious existence. A principle of Nature can thus illumine the pure laws of a Spirit as little as a principle of Spirit the pure laws of a particle.

To suppose the first is to confound Spirit with Nature; to suppose the second is to confound Nature

with Spirit. For only natural being can be subject to natural principles, and only spiritual being subject to spiritual principles.

Men are more prone to confuse Spirit with Nature than Nature with Spirit because their minds are more at home with natural than with spiritual principles. Hence they readily assign to spiritual beings physical 'qualities'; as when they call a woman 'sweet', a temper 'warm'.

The airiest 'controls' of the 'spiritualists' are as subject to this error as the stoutest philosophers. The thoughts of Spirit 'travel' in their world as though they were aeroplanes, and 'vibrate' in it as though they were waves.

184

THE UNIVERSE is nothing but the expression of the true need of a man.

Need thinks—for it needs an object; it wills—for the object it needs it moves to possess; it feels—for the object that, moved to possess, it acquires, it loves.

Such is the active essence of the mind—an essence involving a Universe which, needing, the mind thinks, and, thinking, wills, and, willing, loves.

Not the least of experiences, though it be a mere sensation, but is an expression of the mind's need of God.

Nature's Infinitude fulfils what sensations can not. Spirits' self-consciousness fulfils what Nature can not. God's Infinite Self-consciousness fulfils what Nature and Spirit can not.

For the mind gives all things to itself that it may give God to itself, and its Reason is that Need of the mind which makes its way from a beginning in which the promise of 'Being' exists for it to an end in which the Fulfilment of 'Being' exists for it.

Intellect therefore, under the spur of its desire, drives ever towards its End, and were its End to be removed from it, no universe would ever appear to it.

Men are commonly unaware of their need of the Universe. In consequence the Universe remains estranged from men.

185

WILLING is 'thinking'; for without thinking there exists nothing to will. And thinking is 'willing'; for without willing there is nothing to stir thought. Men however are inclined to distinguish thought from will, because they conceive thought to result, not from the will, but from the mind's passive reflection of the contents of Nature. And they are apt to distinguish will from thought, because they conceive will to be the mover, not of thought, but of physical things—such as their arms and their legs.

186

THE 'ANALYTIC' of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* is a metaphysical detective story. Opening with the clue that 'science exists', its inference deduces—as from the clue of a footprint—the conditions necessary for the existence of such an experience.

Philosophy however cannot be derived from the dogmatic belief that science exists, but that science exists must derive from inescapable conclusions of philosophy.

187

MEN 'judge' delinquents either like officials or like fathers. The first correct with a view to upholding the rights of a body of men; the second temper their correction with a view to upholding the rights of a man.

If a beer bottle be thrown through a window of a Principal's Lodgings what penalty ought the thrower to suffer? Weigh the loss and gain the penalty will bring to each of the parties!

188

HUMAN 'choice' implies rather the paralysis than the power of the will. In it two wills inconsistent with each other neutralise each other till the more

essential, grown the stronger, leaves the choice behind. Here is a man at a cross-roads. Will he take the longer road for the good of another?—or the shorter, for his own? Choosing—impotent—he halts: until, its rival thrust aside, his worse or better will moves freely in him. Men are therefore 'free' in the degree that they are one-wayed creatures freed from choice.

Notwithstanding, the will of the 'good' man is a will more rational than the will of the 'bad' man. For the former will helps to establish human society, the latter to destroy it. A man that, in his childhood, took the shorter road to suit himself may therefore learn to take the longer road to suit a neighbour. To such a man the 'freedom' of his early years will now appear a fraudulent freedom: and his later freedom his sole 'freedom'.

A sturdy mainstay of society, a man will thus have acquired, without the need to 'choose', the unfaltering freedom of the steady keeper of the Ten Commandments; of the far-seeing 'phronimos' of Aristotle; of the social hero of Confucius.

189

IF man's good be the good of his neighbour how can man justly punish his neighbour?

Yet the magistrate may justly punish the *citizen*; for the good of the magistrate is the good, not of his neighbour, but of the State. It is the degenerate cells of an organism, rather than individual organisms, that the punishments of magistrates attempt to excise from the State.

190

THE more disturbed States are the more will magistrates regard the interest of States and the less the interests of individuals.

The less disturbed States are the less will magistrates regard the interest of States and the more the interests of individuals.

If individual men were so trained as to leave magistrates with nothing to do, the interests of the individual and of the State would cease to conflict: the interest of the individual would coincide with that of the State and the interest of the State with that of the individual.

191

TAKE CARE of the individual and the State will take care of itself.

192

A MAN without a merit—is he not as strange as one without a fault?

193

MIGHT the best of men not tremble, were there shown him every man that he might be in every life that he might live?

194

TO MYSELF it can be only a chance what and when and where I was born; what men I was to meet in the world; what was to be my fortune among them.

195

CIRCUMSTANCES draw from men the virtue or the vice which is in them. But what they reveal of a man in the course of a single life is an infinitesimal part of 'himself'. Give Othello an Iago—he is one man: spare him an Iago—he is then another. But both men are 'Othello'.

196

FEW MEN would show themselves evil in every fortune of life; as few men, good in every fortune.

197

IT BELONGS to the wisdom of man to find a place in his life for failure as well as for success. For he would be alike a proud and foolish man who thought he might always succeed. Is not a man rather raised by tranquilly enduring failure than humbled by suffering it?

198

FOR LONG I imagined that I had no better than a distant thought of God. But now I feel my thought of God and my experience of God to be one and the same. I was like a thing knocking disconsolately at an open door.

199

RID YOURSELF of every thought but that of God, and at once God appears to you.

200

HE who lives with God is Still with God . . .

201

DOUBT by thought the power of thought—and be an Agnostic. Deny by thought the power of thought—and be a Sceptic. Thought divided against itself cannot stand.

202

MEN perceive by sense no more than the semblance of things; as, by the eye, the semblance of Nature; by the ear, the semblance of men's thinking.

The façade of things revealed to the senses cannot reveal the inward truth of things; for, by means of the senses, their reality within can only be inferred from their appearance without, and inferences

gathered from appearance are as necessarily uncertain as things immediately known are certain.

God presents no façade to men's senses. There accordingly appears to most men to be nothing there.

203

THE WISDOM of man is to pierce through the veil of the world to the Reality of the Unseen.

204

A MAN is a showing of God, and men may first know God that see His Being mirrored in the Mind of man.

205

DO NOT consider the names but the unnamed and unnameable essence of men. 'Bill' and 'Katie'— who are these but mortal creatures we may joke with or take in to dinner?

206

'THIS is the largest elephant in the world, himself excepted.'

The penetration of opposites—of one and two, great and small, wise and foolish—seems to be the cradle of humour. For as a simulation of a 'unity of the manifold'—as of the unity of the beautiful—it charms while it startles, and startles while it charms, the mind.

The wiseacre who sees no further than the falsity of this unity, though it be with his reason he sees it, is yet as wanting in reason as he is in humour.

Every unity of the manifold, in filling the mind with delight, excites also pleasurable bodily feelings.

Humour excites the body more than the beauties of artists or the laws of Nature. Only mystical experience seems to affect the body more.

207

HUMOUR and wit are the guardians of man's sanity; for, in discovering absurdity to the mind, they enlighten at the same time as they delight the mind.

By showing the absurdities of disproportionate sorrows humour laughs even sorrowful men into sanity.

208

'HUMOUR', often a creation of accident; 'wit', rather of intention.

209

'SAGE being green, and Socrates sage, Socrates was green.'

The wit or humour of the 'Quaternio terminorum' comes of the inter-penetration (through a pun) of different or of opposite natures.

210

THE AUTOMATIC actions of animals do not disprove volition in animals; rather they disclose the power in animals to act without the worries of 'choosing'.

211

THE BEHAVIOUR of unreflecting animals is equally determinable with that of locomotives, and the determinist may take animals for machines as easily as the indeterminist machines for animals. As little however as indeterminists can prove machines to be animals can determinists prove animals to be machines.

212

THE WILL of a flute-player is subject to the state of his instrument, and the will of an embodied man to the state of his body. Man's will is however caused by his body as little as the will of a flautist is caused by his flute. Rather, flute and body alike afford the means whereby the respective powers of their users find their unfettered expression.

213

MAN'S WILL responds to spiritual as much as to bodily beings. If, like the flute, the body affects, for good or evil, the will using it, so and no less do men, for good or evil, affect the will of those they act upon. Lady Macbeth affected Macbeth's will as surely as the body of Macbeth; and the endocrine glands moulded the nature of Plato no more certainly than the wisdom of Socrates.

214

SPIRITUAL influence as little extinguishes the will as physical influence: as 'predictable' by the expert psychologist as is its response to the influence of the body, yet the will's response to human influence is rather the sign of its freedom than the sign of its bondage.

215

UNAFFECTED by spiritual creatures human wills could no more be the wills they are than they could be unaffected by physical bodies.

216

IF the influence of Spirit on Spirit, like the influence of body on Spirit, seems at times to impose on the Spirit a form not its own, it is only as its own nature

may receive that influence that Spirits can act upon and remould it. Its will's receipts from others are impositions as dependent upon itself and its nature as what by the plant or the animal is received from the art and culture of man:—

an art

Which does mend nature, change it rather, but  
The art itself is *nature*. (Shakespeare.)

217

MEN'S ERRORS are fancies masquerading as facts or facts masquerading as fancies . . . Is there a monster, or not, in Loch Ness? Suppose there be no monster. In him who affirms it fancy is then masquerading as fact. But suppose there is a monster. In him who denies it fact is then masquerading as fancy. These opposing errors equally divorce men from Reality.

Logicians ask: What are the *objects* of error? But what are these objects but 'facts' to the ignorant and 'fancies' to the informed?

Facts may unexpectedly turn out to be fancies; in failing then to be facts they become strange 'privations' of fact.

Privations are gaps in Reality, fancies facts beyond it. Each of them partners the other. For privation makes as many gaps in Reality as fancy forms objects in Fairyland.

Privations and fancies:—when men are either forced to think them, or agree to think them, they form as much a part of man's recognised world as the most real of its objects. (Vacant space. Dante's cosmology.)

The objects of men's fancy constitute the world of error when such objects are conceived of as fact, of truth when they speak to the mind through man's revealing Arts. Had men possessed no faculty of fancy, they must have been incapable alike of art and of error; of truth's friend and of truth's enemy. (Hamlet. A Gorgon.)

218

**WHATEVER** Reality can not receive is 'impossible', what it may receive 'possible'. The impossible comes of the decision 'This can be a fiction only'; the possible of the question 'Is this fiction or fact?' A thing that is 'possible' can therefore be fact as little as it can be fiction, as little real as it can be unreal.

If anything exists of which the question can not be asked: 'Is it a fact or is it a fiction?', that thing can be a fact only or a fiction only.

An impossible object can be a fiction only.

God can be a fact only.

219

**PROPOSE** any object—of the nature of the Monster of Loch Ness—neither, like an angular circle, impossible, nor, like the existence of God,

of absolute necessity; then, as a man can think only once about *these*, so also he can only think twice about things like the Monster; for every such empirical thing as much *compels* the idea of a being either real or fictitious, as a necessary or impossible object compels the denial of the one or of the other.

Immanuel Kant refutes the 'ontological' argument by assuming God to have the status of the Monster of Loch Ness.

## 220

SINCE one man may take for a fact what another takes for a fiction, the world of one man may differ from that of another. Were men therefore to have been without a common reason, the worlds of men must have remained as manifold as men themselves; for the fictions of one man could then only have remained the unchallengeable facts of another. (Cf. the changing fortunes of Astronomy.)

It is only reason that can decide, 'This is fact, and that fiction';—only reason therefore that can distinguish the *real* World from the manifold worlds of man's fictions . . .

What is reason but the truth of man's Self? what the World but the truth of man's reason?

Know the World—and you will know your Self; know your Self—and the you will know the World. These two truths are one and the same . . .

221

A FLASH of lightning seems to make and unmake worlds.

222

MOUNTAINS to the aspiring seem aspiring; to the restless, at rest.

223

A MAN'S intrusion makes and does not break the solitariness of lonely places.

224

SPACE and time are distant cousins rather than near kindred. Space:—the partial privation of the Infinite Being of Nature: Time:—the moving measure of the change or duration of all things. Time:—without determinate end or beginning: Space:—beyond end and beginning: the one, without mobility; the other, nothing without it . . .

225

LOVE of knowledge is a hunter whose greyhound is patience.

226

MEN sometimes love the most the men they understand, it seems, the least. (N.)

227

THE GREATEST of teachers are they whose minds can borrow the most and need borrow the least. (Gautama.)

228

MEN chase foxes, not to make an end of foxes, but to make the most they can of the means of ending foxes. Men may thus both like the fox and like ending the fox. (Englishmen.)

229

THE PURPOSE of Sport is to make an end of a means and a means of an end; of War, to make an end of an end and a means of a means.

Sportsmen who, by striving only for victory, make an end of an end are therefore, not sportsmen, but a laughable species of warriors.

230

LIKE SPORTS, Chess and other games are played for the sake of their means rather than for the sake of their end. The means, if neither certain of success nor certain of failure, give men pleasure; for challenging their powers they demonstrate their powers.

The means, if certain of success or certain of failure, give men no pleasure; for challenging their powers they fail to prove their powers.

A skill too masterly or too immature thus numbs men's pleasure in making means their ends, and the man of too much or too little skill will take to a game as little as the man whose interest lies only in his ends.

231

MEN may follow wealth, fame, or lust, or any other of their ends, like lovers for the sake of their love, or like sportsmen for the sake of the means that attain them.

Many men love woman, not like lovers, but like sportsmen: hence the end of their chase is the end of their love. (Don Juan.)

The coyness of maidens is prone to make sportsmen of men. The perfect lover rather prefers to make his charmer his end.

232

WOMEN have commonly swayed their husbands by seeming to give way to them rather than by plainly withstanding them.

Women have thus done a work in the world as unknown to the historian as to their eminent husbands.

233

INCLINATIONS follow Value as children follow their mother: without the enticements of Value no inclination will awaken the will of a man.

234

THE ART of living consists in distinguishing true values from false.

235

EVERY MAN discovers value in something, and scorners of value find their value in scorning it.  
(Cynics.)

236

TO BELIEVE great Teachers is a way of man: to disobey them is a way of his also. Hence men constantly approve in their theories what they disown in their practice.

237

CONFUCIUS, Buddha, Christ—multitudes are continually flowing to and away from them.

238

NO THEORY will affect the will of man that leaves behind an impulse that defies it. Though jealous men may wish to 'love their neighbours as themselves', of necessity they will meet with creatures 'past forbearance'.

239

IMPULSES deaf to men's reason may lead men to madness. Like actors stopping in their parts to mouth and talk nonsense, their victims confound both themselves and their stupefied audience.  
(Hysteria, etc.)

240

OF WHATEVER nature principles may be, men cannot without them be anything but rudderless drifters, and controlled by what they are unable to control.

241

HE loves himself who finds pleasure in the pity of others. He still more loves himself who finds it in self-pity. Self-pity kills, self-censure makes alive; for the one cossets, the other buffets, the self.

242

SAGACIOUS MEN are often ready enough to allow as conclusions what they will not endure as assertions. Assertions appear to them the fruits of prejudice, conclusions of fairmindedness.

## 243

MAN is 'conscious' of what he can express, 'unconscious' of what he can not.

Of what he can express in part only, he is conscious in part and in part unconscious.

Through Art men strive to raise their still 'unconscious' life into consciousness, and delight in the practice of the arts derives from this strife. Some artists express themselves only in part—the unconscious persists with the conscious in their art; the not-to-be-spoken with the spoken. (Tennyson.)

Of some the tongues may break in time through every obstacle. (Shakespeare.)

## 244

MEN are 'unconscious' at once of what they are leaving behind and of what they are pressing towards.

The Arts of the former liberate in man the consciousness of his animal impulse, of the latter the consciousness of his spiritual essence. (Jazz composers. Bach.)

The Arts are thus the expression in part or in whole of what is either below or above the natural consciousness of normal men.

245

TO JUDGE a man wrongly is to make no more than a caricature of him.

Misjudged persons might therefore show good sense in laughing rather than in frowning at their wonderful 'portraits'.

246

THINK of what you think of men, not so much of what men think of you.

247

NO LIVING THING appears unnatural to itself. But what would one of them say were it to be metamorphosed into an other? (A cow into Shakespeare? Shakespeare into a cow?)

248

EMBODIED CREATURES find their ends in the pursuit, or in the avoidance, of things. Success in either therefore gives them satisfaction; the one of 'delight', the other of 'relief'.

To eat and drink with a view to avoiding the discomforts of hunger and thirst and to mate with a view to fulfilling a bodily need is the proper perfection of animals. But men, surpassing the sufficiency of the animal nature, are apt to turn the 'reliefs' of the animal into the 'delights' of the epicure. Men come thus to eat without hunger, and to mate without need.

The needs of animals being intermittent, so therefore are the reliefs of their needs. But, to make their delights as constant as possible, through the invention of dainties men provoke the needs that grow drowsy in animals. Water, which brings 'relief', is hence the intermittent refreshment of animals; but wine, which brings 'delight', the not infrequent refreshment of men.

If powers of this nature surpass the powers of the animal, they are equally surpassed by the powers of man's 'reason'. For the nature of reason is to run after Objects which, being not rooted in the needs of the body, call to men more commandingly than wine and dainties and the lips of the lover. For it is the prerogative of man to seek (unconsciously or consciously) treasures of more value to him than the prizes of the body; and the vigorous pursuit of such treasures is to the rational man a pursuit as inviting as the delights to be won by it.

## 249

LIKE a midwife Nature helps to birth men's unconscious longings. A meadow brings to life in one an unborn love of beauty. A star in another

delivers an unconscious longing for the brightness of God. If a man is an artist he will see in the meadow and star (as lovers see in women) perfections that quicken his inmost desires: as in the meadow, Beauty; in the star, a stair to Heaven.

250

MEN tire their feet to reach a mountain peak, but not so readily their minds to reach the peak of Reason. As if more marvels were not to be seen there than from the top of the Earth!

251

STUDENTS of philosophy are ready enough to allow of more eyes in the world than their own, and though they may see through them what they take at first to be monsters, yet they persuade themselves to shake paws with the animals. Did nations seek to be philosophers they would soon enough make friends.

252

THE REAL MAN owns the Universe as other men own their bodies. The sighs of the world are as much his as a tooth-ache, and its stars, treasures in his hand.

Own the world as you own your body; own your body as you own your coat.

253

MIGHT NOT some wise being say of man today: 'This creature is a sage—if it be made so strangely as to wish itself miserable: or a fool—if it be made so sagely as to wish itself happy'?

254

TO RULE a pantry well is better than to rule a kingdom badly, and parlourmaids may happen to make more of the world than prime-ministers.

255

IN patriotic Parliaments men find the liberties they lose in vociferous mobs.

256

PATRIOTISMS that bear arms are 'socially' virtuous, but only patriotisms that link arms can be 'morally' so.

257

BEHAVIOURISM and Determinism:—theories which come into being through the 'purpose' they rule out of being.

258

DISCOVER with respect to any theory proposed to you what kind of universe would come of it.

259

TO BELIEVE in some Reality is necessary for the mind. They who have unlearnt the real existence of one, have therefore come to learn the real existence of some other, thing.

260

WHAT books bring to men depends on what men bring to books.

261

MINDS are like heads; books are like hats. Sometimes minds and books fit. Sometimes they give fits.

262

READING great writers is like wringing wet cloths. Wring them out again and again, and there will always be something more to wring out of them!

263

CONSIDER what a thinker has not said and you may often better understand what he has.

264

PHILOSOPHY comes of a philosopher's axioms, and a philosopher's axioms come of his inward experience. When his experience is great his philosophy therefore will also be great. (Plotinus. Eckhart.)

265

MEN are apt to take the thoughts of sages for the thoughts they mistake for them, and human minds may gather sometimes from the best of seeds the worst of weeds.

266

OPTIMISTS make over-smooth, pessimists over-rough, the way to their ends.

267

HABITUAL PLEASURES grow as dull to man as rare ones remain pleasant to him. A sage who smokes a single cigarette a day, accordingly enjoys his rarity more surely than a thoughtless man who ventures idly on a hundred of them.

268

GREAT MEN reveal themselves imperfectly to smaller ones. It is only the shadows of Sages that are generally perceived in the world.

269

TOLERATE yourself. Tolerate other men. You and they are pots in the hand of a Potter—things in the making, not things badly made.

270

MEN are of more moment than their faults.

271

DELAY in giving helps man's longing for the gift delayed. Delay may therefore be a kind unkindness; its want, an unkind kindness.

272

BE PATIENT with evil lest, without it, you miss good; for they are happier who have to win their good than they who come easily by it.

273

IT IS the aridity of the soul that finally waters the soul.

274

BETTER for man to suffer unjustly than never to suffer at all.

A constant good fortune would be rather the quietus than the enjoyment of fortune.

275

DIFFICULTIES are not men's dungeons but the steps that lead out of them.

276

WHAT IS IT but the wounds of souls that make them well?

277

THE PAST returns nothing: the future retrieves all.

278

PROVIDENCE cares more for what we shall be than for what we are. If it numbs us here, it is to keep us warmer There. Men's present sufferings are courtesies of God.

279

GOD is Beauty not to be seen.

280

GOD is not an appendix to the world but the world a preface to God.

281

MAN'S 'first sight' of things must disappear in order that a 'second sight' may appear in him.

282

WHAT men perceive of the universe is as nothing to what they might perceive of it. Like the pupae of butterflies they remain unsuspecting of the glowing sun they are destined presently to fly in.

283

THE 'rational' Self can unite the World with itself only as it excludes its Self from the World. The 'mystical' Self unite itself with the World only by including its Self in the World.

284

TO KNOW GOD as the Self and to know the Self as God is to come into the presence of a World of which reason is only the door-keeper.

Like another Virgil reason's understanding guides the soul into a world which it cannot itself enter. For it is not within the power of reason's understanding to open the eye of the soul to the universe as it is. To know the Truth of the universe is to transcend the wits of reason.

285

THE PERFECT mystic Spirit loses every sight of God that is not God's own seeing of Himself.

286

WHOEVER reaches God perceives with God all evil crowning even now the love of all for God, the love of God for all.

287

GOD in Himself is a Silence—in His creatures, a Song. The souls of God live either in His Song or in His Silence. These are called to Silence that they may be Silent with God. Those open the lips of their souls that they may be joyful with God.

To every soul it belongs to be at times the Song, at times the Silence.

In the Song the Silence lives; in the Silence the Song.

288

THE UNIVERSE is a poem of which each event is a syllable: only a mystic can surprise its meaning; only a mystic its grammar.

289

**ONLY HE** who lets nothing slip of the truth of the Universe can be secure from all sorrow.

290

**THERE ARE** more things that must be left to silence than can be given to speech.

291

**LIKE** a rest in Music:—Silence.